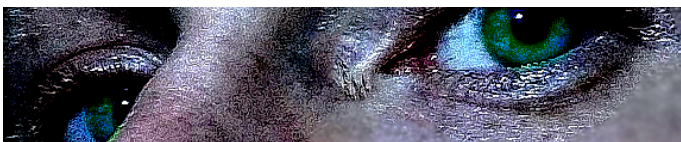
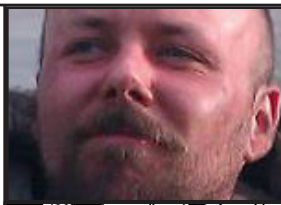




Niall!



ORRIN!



Chris!



A New NI Party?

When it comes to voting season, there are always endless frustrations when it comes deciding on who to vote for. This can be exceptionally frustrating, especially when you realise that it is always the same people!

This has a number of problems associated with it. The first is that you never get any new ideas. It is always the same thing day in and day out. Same parties, same policies and the same problems. However, the lull in innovation is not the only problem. The very fact that the same parties always stand means that people get into the habit of voting in a party. They do not vote because of policies, they vote because they have always done it and their daddy did it and his daddy did it, etc ad infinitum.

However, no party has struggled with this problem so much than the humble Green Party. They are the major promoters of sustainability. However, they tend to emphasise environmental issues over all else. Of course saving the planet is important, but other than that they are like anarchists! Politics requires real policies, governing real people.

So, is there an up and comer who could possibly fill this role? Well, maybe there is. They are the Meritocracy Party. The M party are devoted to providing equal opportunities to every child so that the only inequality in society is that of merit. Currently, your social status is quantified by how much capital you own, i.e. how rich you are, and even more, how rich your parents were!

In the current position, the world is very much divided. The super rich 1% and the people. Even the scapegoat 'middle class' is disappearing slowly into oblivion. Now it is like the rich and the poor and no in between.

The Meritocracy Party will include policies of 100% inheritance tax to avoid nepotism and cronyism. It will support free education up to PhD level for all as well as free health and dental care. It will also consider a minimum 'citizen's wage' and the abolition of corporations and replacing them with companies and partnerships.

The Meritocratic Party claim to be the future. Perhaps they are worth a vote in next year's elections.

www.meritocracyparty.org



FUN RUN FOR GIRO!



Community! A reflection on modern day NI!

What is community? It is a divisive subject anywhere you go but especially in Northern Ireland. In fact, it has divided this country for centuries.

The usual interpretation of community is a group of people, living in the same geographical area or belonging to a certain social group or caste. They then generally remain loyal to these groups throughout their lives. This social model works to an extent in areas where there is little to no social change, however it swiftly becomes problematic in a dynamic and changing society.

It is true however, that this country has come a long way in the last number of years. I congratulate those who now repudiate harming one another over religious and ethnic divisions. However, there is still a long way to go to achieve a rational society which has left these issues behind.

Northern Ireland has now found itself in a rather strange place. It no longer only has to face its own internal problems, but it also must contend with international standards. In certain parts of the world, such divisions could be interpreted as backward or primitive. Excuses I have heard about this usually say 'people have lost faith in their region', well I say, people have lost faith in themselves. When they want something done they expect politicians and people in government to provide for them. The reality is however, that the list of things that the

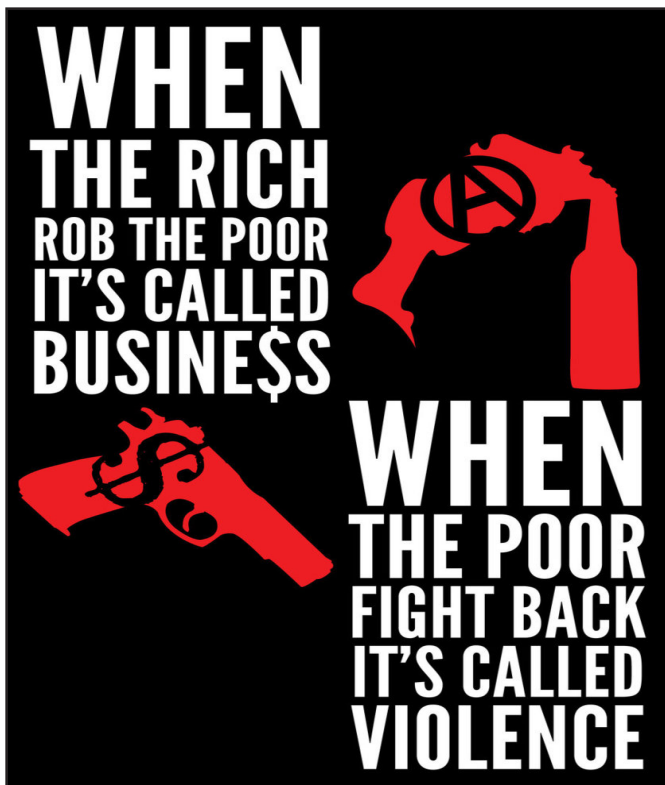
government can do are steadily decreasing. Whether or not you blame the poor education of our elected representatives, or their ideological biases, is besides the point.

You may ask what I think you should do or what can you do in this type of situation? I think people should start to think for themselves, even those that are convinced they already do, but in reality they are just complaining and watching TV. Those in charge of our communities are nothing like you. They have little in common with the people. Communities must become more self reliant to reach a point where they do not require outside influence to be able to exist in a positive and communitarian fashion. Communities should be a diverse mixing pot of ideas and beliefs which should not come into conflict with creating a better today and a better future for everyone. There must be a balance between personal freedom and helping the community.

I am not proposing an idealised utopia of mere fantasy, but a community ruled not by vested interests in ideologies but in the people.

A better world is possible where people take the communities back from private hands and allow real change to come from the bottom for once rather than trickle down from those at the top of the economic ladder. We need a community that will work for the betterment of all and not just the privileged few.

“Every successful individual knows that his or her achievements depended on a community of people working together!” -Paul Ryan



Capture the Giro D'Italia!

As many of you are aware, we are lucky to have one of the world's biggest events in road bicycle racing passing through on 10th May 2014.

The Giro D'Italia, a racing tradition dating back over a hundred years, will pass through the breathtaking backdrop of Ballycastle. A town in which many in our community will join together in celebrating, socialising and having a good time.

Over that weekend there will be all sorts of events and activities being held as we rally together to make the most of this special event. If you are missing out then get involved before it's too late. The more of us out and about enjoying ourselves, the better!

A lot of our town's wonderful inhabitants have put a lot of effort into decorating shops, houses, and bicycles. The town and even some lovely lil sheeps have been steeped in pink!! Along with that there have also been massive efforts made by our various community groups to bring their individual brands of entertainment to make the weekend even more special.

So if you do nothing else, at least try and support some of them, I hear our younglings from the youth clubs have some special things they've been practising to mark the day as well. So be sure to get to the seafront and have a look.

An idea that was sparked in the wonderful imagination of some of our very own local lovely ladies, namely Lisa Mooney & Kathleen McGarry (many thanks for that btw) was to somehow record as much of the weekend as possible with the aim of making something we can all treasure as a keep sake and a reminder of what promises to be a fun filled weekend.

Do you own a camera/smart phone/sound recorder or any device that can capture sound/video/images? If you do then why not join in? Use the opportunity to ask those around you what they think of the events and why they are out and where they are from. After the weekend share all of the things you've recorded with our group on Facebook, Capture The Giro D'Italia, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/854497007897806/> and a bunch of us will get to work making radio type shows, video documentaries, musical slideshows and whatever else the imagination can come up with to mark our efforts over this big weekend in Moyle. If you have an interest in editing videos, making slideshows, writing stories, creating podcasts or anything like that then we'd love you to get involved too, as this is a community project for all of us.

DON'T BE DISSOLVED, GET INVOLVED!!!!



Secretary's Perspective-Banville House Review

Banville Hotel- Banbrige.

I stayed in the Banville Hotel in Banbrige on the (date) of January 2014. I stayed there with my boyfriend at the time. We booked the double room through the deals website 'living social'.

On arrival I have to say I wasn't overly impressed with the exterior of the building. For starters the hotel wasn't clearly sign posted. Secondly the outside of the building was run down and outdated.

On entering the hotel, it was also outdated and dark.

The staff were polite and helpful while giving us our room key and directing us to our room.

The room itself was large, as was the bed. The room was very clean and had all the necessary amenities, such as a hair dryer, a welcome pack

including all the things to do in the area, towels, extra blankets, soaps, teas, coffees, a television and wifi access.

On the first night, we visited the onsite restaurant. The staff were friendly and attentive, however the food, like most of the hotel was out-dated, over sized and mis-matched.

The hotel also had a night club and recreational room. The night club was closed during the week (when we stayed), the recreational room was in shambles. The carpet was torn in places, as was the wall paper, the pool table was broken and the place was generally dirty.

Overall the hotel needed a overhaul and a revamp, it was incredibly outdated and needed serious attention in some places. I enjoyed my stay and felt very welcome, but I would not recommend this hotel.